

# Washington State Patrol Media Release

*Chief John R. Batiste*

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## **Auto Dealership Fined For Illegal Use of Fuel**

A case involving the illegal use of red dyed diesel fuel in a highway use vehicle was announced today by Captain Coral Estes of the Washington State Patrol Commercial Vehicle Division. Whitney's Value Ford of Elma was cited for having red dyed diesel in the tanks of four Ford pickup trucks and one wrecker.

The case came about after a tip was received at the Fuel Tax Investigation Unit of the Washington Department of Licensing in Olympia. Officers from the State Patrol and an agent from Department of Licensing then converged on Value Ford on November 29, 2005, taking samples from diesel pickups and a tow truck. Laboratory analysis showed a total of five vehicles on the Value Ford lot contained red dyed diesel, a fuel used primarily in off road and farming equipment. The red dye is put in diesel to identify it as not taxed at 24.4 cents federal tax and 31 cents Washington state tax.

The Department of Licensing Fuel Tax Investigation Unit has assessed Whitney's Value Ford \$5,000 for the violations.

"This tax on fuel supports our roadways in Washington State. In putting red dyed diesel in pickup trucks for sale at Value Ford, they are putting the potential buyer in jeopardy of being fined if found with dyed diesel in the truck they purchase," said Captain Estes.

Tips concerning the illegal use of red dyed diesel can be called into the Fuel Tax Evasion Hotline at 1 (800) 497-FUEL. All calls are confidential.

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